

fig. 3, in the same plate, only with this difference (being of a different date), let the base of your triangles include the walls.

The habit practised by some architects of taking a base line of a triangle, and dividing it into parts, is very objectionable. I must differ with Professor Cockerell, Mr. Billings, and other gentlemen, on this point. If we are to divide in Vitruvius's style every thing into parts, of what use are regular figures, or geometry at all? It was very well for the Romans, who, not caring for mathematical studies, chose to save themselves the trouble of following the geometrical excellence of the Greeks, and therefore divided the height and width of not merely the building, but all its parts into modules, minutes, seconds, &c., an excellent method of copying; but as to any originality arising out of such a process, it is not very probable. On the contrary, with regular figures bounded by the circle, their graceful combinations, their power of distributing and equalizing all the supports and bearings of buildings, are not exhausted: the same figures which created the trefoil, the trifolium, and the pentafoil, will generate a hundred new ornaments, and tastefully arrange many a new specimen of the botanical world. Of the use of geometry in floral decorations, I have before spoken; and it is agreeable to observe, that no sooner is the orderly hand of nature disturbed, or its dictates disobeyed, than confusion is the consequence. In my opinion, architecture has not reached its *summum infinitum*. Gothic architecture, now the rage and the fashion, will, in the course of a very few years, present a different aspect: the far-famed cathedrals and churches of England, now looked up to with wonder, and restored with precision, will be gazed upon as specimens of a not very enlightened age; the ugly gargyle, the representation of monkish contentions, and other vagaries, will have passed away; and a style, based upon all that is beautiful and good, will rear its head decked with nature's gift, in a more christian-like manner, and with more science and art.

A letter on the same subject from Mr. J. J. Cole was then read, from which we extract the following.

"The fine granite perpendicular tower of Probus, in Cornwall, is in height to the top of the battlements, exactly four squares of one side of the tower on plan; and each square, and each half-square, is particularly marked by complete or interrupted string courses; and to the top of the pinnacles, is also exactly four squares of the average breadth of the elevation, including the buttresses; and the disposition of all the minor points is settled in like manner, but so clearly, that with the pleasure of variety, there is no suspicion of formality; and what enhances the effect is this, that the stories in clear of the buttresses, and of the different panelled bands, are each in height exactly a square and a half, the well known form of beauty.

In another fine perpendicular tower, Boston in Lincolnshire, I find, that in order to obtain its required elevation as a landmark, the diagonal of the square, instead of the side, was used, and the result is, that the first square reaches to the first buttress weathering and the springing of the great window—the next to a marked lead of panelling—the next to the top of the first battlement, and the next to the top of the tower. Beyond which is exactly another square to the top of the lantern.

Both these towers afford illustration of the best projection for the buttresses—a point most uncertain in designing, and most important in effect. The rule is easy enough—Given the square of the tower or plan, take the diagonal for the greatest spread of the buttresses—(I need hardly observe how gracefully this works with the other particulars in the angle view). But good rules will not always make good designs. The real architect will, by prudent or piquant exceptions in parts, give character and expression to his work. In the case of Boston, on account of its unusual height, the average spread of the buttresses, instead of the greatest, is equal to the diagonal of the tower. But at Probus, where there is neither lantern nor spire, yet, as a tower most superb in its effect, the coincidence of dimensions between the diagonal of the plan, and the width across the buttresses at their base, is remarkable. The diagonal as calculated, is 34 feet 4½ inches:

by measurement across the point (made years before), is 34 feet 4½ inches."

Mr. P'Anson said the inquiry was a very interesting one, and seemed to take us back to the old mysteries of our art, but he for one was not quite satisfied, as to its soundness, and was anxious to have it further elucidated.

Mr. Donaldson thought it of so much consequence, that he would gladly see an evening set apart for its discussion, when those gentlemen who had studied it might attend, and set forth their views at length.

The chairman announced that the first premium, offered to the students for the best notes and illustrations of papers read, had been awarded to Mr. Boucher; and a second premium for the same to Mr. S. J. Nicholl; also that the premium for sketches of designs made at the Institute, had been awarded to Mr. Boucher.

#### THE BUILDINGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On Wednesday, the 10th inst., a deputation of the District Surveyors' Association, consisting of Mr. Charles Mayhew, Mr. George Pownall, and Mr. Robert Hesketh, honorary secretary, waited on Lord Morpeth, relative to the Metropolitan Buildings Act Amendment Bill. Mr. Mayhew has favoured us with the following particulars of the interview, which we give in his own words.

We were introduced by W. A. Makinon, Esq., M.P., for Lymington, who has taken a great interest in the subject, and by his request I had the honour of explaining to his lordship,—"That the District Surveyors' Association had given much consideration to the bill, and were decidedly of opinion, that if it were to become law, it would give much dissatisfaction to the public, unnecessarily interfere with private rights, and call upon the district surveyors to exercise an authority as to the internal construction of buildings, which they ought not to possess, and would not only be highly objectionable and vexatious to the public, but place upon them a responsibility which they ought not to bear.

That the Sections 2, 3, and 12, would give unlimited power to the official referees, to alter the law as they might deem fit; section 2, as regards trivial matters; section 3, as regards special cases. The District Surveyors would be "directed" by them, and "in obedience to such directions," they would have to perform their duties. Section 12, would make their awards absolute and without appeal, and Section 13, would oblige the magistrates to enforce them.

That Sections 15 and 16, with regard to party walls, although good in principle, were defective and ambiguous.

That the alterations proposed by the bill to the schedules of the present Act, by making two sets of rules at variance with each other, applicable to buildings generally, would create endless confusion and continual cases of reference.

That the regulation as to internal walls would not be generally understood, and be an unnecessary interference with internal construction.

That doing away with wood plates and bond, in walls one brick thick, was bad in practice.

That the proposed regulation as to windows not being allowed in opposite walls of buildings in different occupations, unless a distance of sixteen feet intervened, would be an unjust interference with private rights; and also, that requiring open areas at the back of houses, to be continued down to the lowest floor, was not only depriving the tradesman of the most valuable portion of his property, namely, the room on the ground story, for his business, but creating a receptacle for neglected filth, which would otherwise be constantly cleared away.

For these, and several other reasons, to which his lordship, and Mr. Phillips, who was present, most kindly gave the greatest attention, the deputation suggested the propriety of withdrawing the bill, and of preparing a new bill forthwith, based upon the general principle of preventing any nuisance which may affect the public, arising either from noxious or dangerous trades, ruinous buildings, next to the public ways, and any encroachment thereon; also for preventing fire from communicating from one building to another, making a perfect

regulation as to party-walls, and carefully avoiding any interference with private rights. But should his lordship still consider it his duty to persevere with the bill, the deputation begged to call his lordship's particular attention to the various alterations which the District Surveyors' Association suggested, and then submitted to him. His lordship requested that the papers might be left with him, and the deputation, after thanking his lordship, and Mr. Phillips for their most polite and kind reception, withdrew.

#### RESTORATION OF ST. JOHN'S GATE.

FREEMASONS OF THE CHURCH.

On the 14th inst. the Council of the Freemasons of the Church gave a conversation, to which admission was obtained by a payment, to be applied towards the restoration of St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell. The rooms were crowded, and Sir Walter James, Bart. took the chair.

Mr. J. Wykeham Archer addressed the meeting at some length, in a discourse relative to the object of the assembly. He likewise explained the general objects and pretensions of the Architectural College of Freemasons of the Church, describing the title adopted by the society, as one not intended to express any conformity with the general body of freemasons, but rather as indicative of the professed views of the college, viz., the recovery, maintenance, and furtherance of the free principles and practice of architecture. Such having been in their opinion, the principles of the early fraternities so designated, and who by their labours under the authority of the Pope, and according to the resolutions of a council held for the purpose in the 13th century, introduced a general and uniform change and improvement into the system of ecclesiastical architecture from which resulted the early pointed style, a style perfect and beautiful in a scientific and artistic view, and peculiarly appropriate in its application to the spirit of the Christian faith. It was likewise stated, that in addition to the above views, the Freemasons of the Church made it an object of their exertions to preserve and, if necessary, to effect the restoration of such architectural remains of antiquity as might be threatened with demolition unnecessarily, or should be endangered by decay, or, through neglect or local circumstances, have become inaccessible to the public. Hence their efforts towards the restoration of the gate of the Knights Hospitallers, in Clerkenwell, which was ordered in accordance with the directions of the Street Improvement Act, either to be demolished entirely, or as an alternative to be covered over with canvas.

The recovery, progress, and present hopeful aspect of the gate were described, and a strong appeal made to the public and the press, for an extension of the means and of the powerful advocacy which have been of valuable service in forwarding the work thus far. The lecturer then dwelt upon the importance of a national conservation of tradition, in connection with its history, and in reference to its progress, and referred to visible objects as a mnemonic standard of great consequence even in a moral point of view.

Some observations followed, touching the destruction of ancient edifices, in many cases without the plea of necessity, especially in London.

The remains of the church of St. John, together with some other objects of antiquarian interest existing in Clerkenwell, were described. After which, a detail of the events and characters, whose fame imparts by association, an increased interest to St. John's Gate, introduced the following summary, viz., Jerusalem, the high and sacred events of which it has been the theatre; state of Palestine under the caliphs, and the early practice of pilgrimage to the holy sepulchre by the western Christians; permanent establishment of the Italian Christians in Jerusalem, and the foundation of the hospital of St. John the almoner. The events which succeeded the Council of Clermont, viz., the rabble Crusades, the regular combination of the princes of Europe, and the results of the holy war. The erection of a military order in the fraternity of Hospitallers. Their glorious achievements and various fortunes. Following the history of the knights of St. John, the